

effort, congressionally, to deal with that issue as well.

Trade With Europe

Q. Mr. President, when you talked to Mr. Prodi today, did you talk about American beef and the bananas? What are the results of these conversations?

The President. Well, they agreed to work with us to try to resolve both those matters in an expeditious fashion. They are causing real trouble, not only between the United States and the European Union but for our efforts to build a global trading system. Because if there is an international body which is supposed to resolve these disputes and you win and then you win again and then you win again and nothing happens, it's very frustrating. It undermines our ability to build support in the Congress and in the country for a new trade round which, as you know, I think is very, very important.

Nuclear Weapons in Armenia

Q. Sir, on Armenia, on nuclear weapons, are there nuclear weapons or nuclear stores in Armenia that you know about?

The President. I believe that what we have done on the nuclear weapons issue and getting the nuclear weapons out of all the republics of the former Soviet Union, except for Russia, is well-known, and I have no reason to believe that we have not succeeded in that.

Payment of United Nations Dues

Q. Mr. President, what would be the message sent if the U.S. again fails to pay its U.N. dues? And will you use your veto pen to ensure that the U.N. dues are paid this year?

The President. Well, I have already vetoed the legislation which didn't provide for that, as you know. And now I'm working very, very hard to try to resolve that. I hope that the responsible leaders in the Senate and the House, in the Republican and the Democratic Party, in the pro-life and pro-choice camps, will work through this.

It is wrong for the United States not to meet its responsibilities to the United Nations, and we get a lot out of that. You know, there are these people in Kosovo and else-

where around the world, in East Timor and other places, doing work that America does not have to do because of the United Nations. And all they want us to do is to pay our fair share, and that's what I think we ought to do.

I've got to go to President Ford's Medal of Freedom now—I mean, Congressional Medal.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:40 p.m. on the South Grounds at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to President Robert Kocharian of Armenia; President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan; and President Romano Prodi of Italy, who met with the President in his capacity as President of the European Council.

Remarks on Presenting the Congressional Gold Medal to Former President Gerald R. Ford and Former First Lady Betty Ford

October 27, 1999

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gephardt, Mr. Arme, Mr. Ehlers, Senator Lott, Senator Daschle, Senator Thurmond, Senator Abraham, Governor, Chaplain Ford, Chaplain Ogilvie; to the members of the Ford family and the Members of the Congress who are here; Secretary Albright, Secretary Cohen, Ambassador Holbrooke; Senator and Mrs. Dole, good to see you; and Mr. Michel, Secretary Laird, so many other great Americans who are here.

You know, so many wonderful things have been said here today, I wouldn't be surprised if President Ford didn't leave here and check to see whether the filing is closed in the New Hampshire primary. *[Laughter]*

I would like to say that I think every Member of Congress and every former colleague you have here is proud to be here, without regard to his or her party. There is one person who is not here I would like to take just 15 seconds to acknowledge because he embodied so many of the qualities that we now revere you for, and that's Senator John Chafee from Rhode Island. We miss him, and we are grateful, too, for his contributions to our Nation.

It was just a couple of months ago that I had the honor of welcoming President and Mrs. Ford back to the White House to award Gerald Ford the Presidential Medal of Freedom, so he wouldn't be the only person in his house without one. *[Laughter]* It is fitting now that both the White House and the Congress have bestowed their highest awards on the Fords because they served both the Congress and the White House so nobly.

In these hallowed halls, President Ford, as Congressman Ford, worked for 25 years. On the House floor, he was a forceful leader. In the caucus room, he was a loyal party leader. In the cloakroom and the committee room, he knew when to put politics aside for the sake of the people.

As has been said, he never sought the Presidency. But thank goodness for the rest of us he did not shrink from it, either. He steered us through stormy seas to new and brighter beginnings for human rights, for the reduction of nuclear arms, for America's role in the world.

And so many of the issues that occupied him then continue to be on his agenda today, whether he's advising his successors in the Oval Office or defending affirmative action or making the case for free trade. I am immensely grateful for all the times we have spent together, for his counsel, for his support, for his always constructive criticism, and for the occasional golf game.

I also want to say, as so many have, a personal word of thanks to Betty Ford. Perhaps no First Lady in our history, with the possible exception of Eleanor Roosevelt, has touched so many of us in such a personal way. Because I lost my mother to breast cancer, Betty Ford is a heroine to me. Because my family has been victimized by alcoholism, and I know what it's like to see good, fine people stare into the abyss of their own personal despair, I will be forever grateful to the Betty Ford Clinic. And for the millions of other people whose lives have literally been turned around and often saved—they may not have gone to that clinic but went somewhere because she showed them it was not wrong for a good person and a strong person to be imperfect and ask for help. You gave us a gift, and we thank you.

I also want to say that there's something special about them together. Their children are here, still rooting for them, and that's something, because kids go through hell if their folks are in politics. They get all the burdens and none of the benefits.

I'll tell you a little story. On September 19, 1993, for what I understand was the only time in the history of America, four Presidents had dinner in the White House. President and Mrs. Ford were there; President and Mrs. Carter was there; and President Bush joined Hillary and me in the White House. It was a magnificent night. It was the night after the Middle East peace signing between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat, and it was the night before we kicked off the campaign to ratify the North American Free Trade Agreement. And we were all sort of carried away by the moment.

I invited all the Presidents to spend the night in the White House. I thought that would be a neat thing, kind of a bunking party, you know. And President Bush stayed, and President and Mrs. Carter stayed. But President and Mrs. Ford said that they were going to spend the night in the hotel room where they had spent their first night as a married couple nearly 50 years before. They did not have time to come to the White House. They were seeing to their own business, and I love that. *[Laughter]* I've told that story a hundred times ever since, and I never get tired of it. It think they made the right decision. *[Laughter]*

Gerald Ford had the great honor of being President on our Bicentennial. And on that July 4th, 23 years ago, he stood in Valley Forge and spoke these words: "A nation survives only so long as the spirit of sacrifice and self-discipline is strong within its people." We are here today in no small measure because that spirit was so strong within Gerald and Betty Ford.

Mr. President, there's one other personal thing I want to say. Every American remembers where he or she was when you became President. We're all up here talking now about how great you were in healing the country and the wonderful words you said. But you made some tough decisions, too. And when you made your healing decisions, you made the Democrats and the liberals

mad one day, and then you made the conservatives mad the next day. You made everybody mad at you.

I was a young politician trying to get elected to Congress. Thank God I failed. [*Laughter*] Otherwise I would have never become President, probably. But I want you to know something personal. It was easy for us to criticize you, because we were caught up in the moment. You didn't get caught up in the moment, and you were right. You were right for the controversial decisions you made to keep the country together, and I thank you for that.

So it is our common honor to thank these people for their contributions for America and my pleasure now to ask the Speaker and Senator Thurmond to join me as we present them the Congressional Gold Medal.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:02 p.m. in the rotunda at the Capitol. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. John Engler of Michigan; U.S. Special Envoy Richard C. Holbrooke; former Senator Bob Dole, and his wife Elizabeth; former Representative Robert H. Michel; and former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the former President Gerald R. Ford, former First Lady Betty Ford, and Speaker J. Dennis Hastert.

Statement on the Attack at the Armenian Parliament

October 27, 1999

I am shocked and saddened by today's armed attacks in the Armenian Parliament. I condemn this senseless act against individuals actively engaged in building democracy in their country. The victims and their families are in our thoughts and prayers.

The United States has built strong ties with Armenia, focused on helping the Armenian people build a prosperous, secure, and democratic future. At this time of tragedy, we renew our support for the Armenian people and their leaders as they continue to build on the principles that today's victims have so courageously embodied.

Joint Declaration by President William Jefferson Clinton and European Commission President Romano Prodi

October 27, 1999

1. President Clinton and President Prodi held a wide-ranging discussion on 27 October about the prospects for launching a new Round of trade negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) next month at Seattle. There was an essential overlap of interests and a desire to collaborate closely to bridge remaining differences.

2. They recalled the EU-U.S. Bonn Declaration of June 1999, where we agreed that "together we can advance our shared values, our common security and our mutual prosperity more effectively than either of us alone. Together . . . we can face . . . the complexity of ensuring that democracy and free markets improve tangibly the lives of people in a rapidly globalizing world."

3. Mindful of the essential role played by the multilateral trading system in supporting over the last 50 years the greatest economic expansion in history and more recently in containing the adverse impacts of economic downturns in Asia and elsewhere, the two leaders agreed to strive to secure agreement in Seattle to launch a new Round of global trade negotiations.

4. Their discussions concentrated on the possible topics for a new Round and how to provide momentum for a successful launch at Seattle. Not only agriculture and services, but a number of other issues need to be included, to meet the U.S. and EU's respective interests and those of our partners, but also to ensure that the WTO continues to be a leading part of the solution to the problems that will confront the global economy in the next century. In this respect, they discussed topics such as comprehensive market access; greater coherence in international economic policy making to complement and enhance the work underway in the Bretton Woods institutions and other UN agencies; government procurement (including transparency and market access); foreign direct investment; electronic commerce (including extension of the moratorium agreed last May); competition; trade facilitation; trade-related